

Maseru, Lesotho
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News release

Basotho embrace COVID-19 vaccination but find government assistance lacking, Afrobarometer survey finds

More than one in three Basotho say their household lost a primary source of income because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but only about one in seven say they received pandemic-related assistance from the government, a recent Afrobarometer survey indicates.

A majority of citizens say pandemic-related assistance was distributed unfairly, and most think that a lot of the resources intended for the COVID-19 response were lost to corruption.

While almost half of Basotho approve of the government's overall response to COVID-19, far fewer give it good marks when it comes to supporting vulnerable households, minimising disruptions to children's education, and ensuring that health facilities are adequately resourced.

Most respondents report having been vaccinated against COVID-19, and fewer than one in 10 express a reluctance to accept the vaccine.

Key findings

- About one in 10 Basotho (11%) say a member of their household became ill with COVID-19 or tested positive for the virus, while more than one-third (37%) say someone in their household lost a job, business, or primary source of income due to the pandemic (Figure 1).
- About one in seven Basotho (15%) report that their household received pandemic-related assistance from the government. Only a minority (38%) say such assistance was distributed fairly (Figure 2).
- Three-quarters of citizens believe that "a lot" (64%) or "some" (12%) of the resources intended for the COVID-19 response have been lost to corruption (Figure 3).
- Basotho are almost evenly split in their assessments of the government's overall performance in managing the response to the COVID-19 pandemic: 46% say it is doing "fairly well" or "very well," while 50% say it is doing a poor job (Figure 4).
- But large majorities are dissatisfied with the government's efforts to minimise disruptions to children's education (76%), provide relief to vulnerable households (68%), and ensure that health facilities are adequately resourced (64%) (Figure 5).
- More than four in five Basotho (83%) say they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 (Figure 6).
 - Vaccine-hesitant respondents most commonly cite concerns that the vaccine may cause COVID-19 or negative side effects (24%) and that the vaccine was developed too quickly (16%) (Figure 7).

Afrobarometer surveys

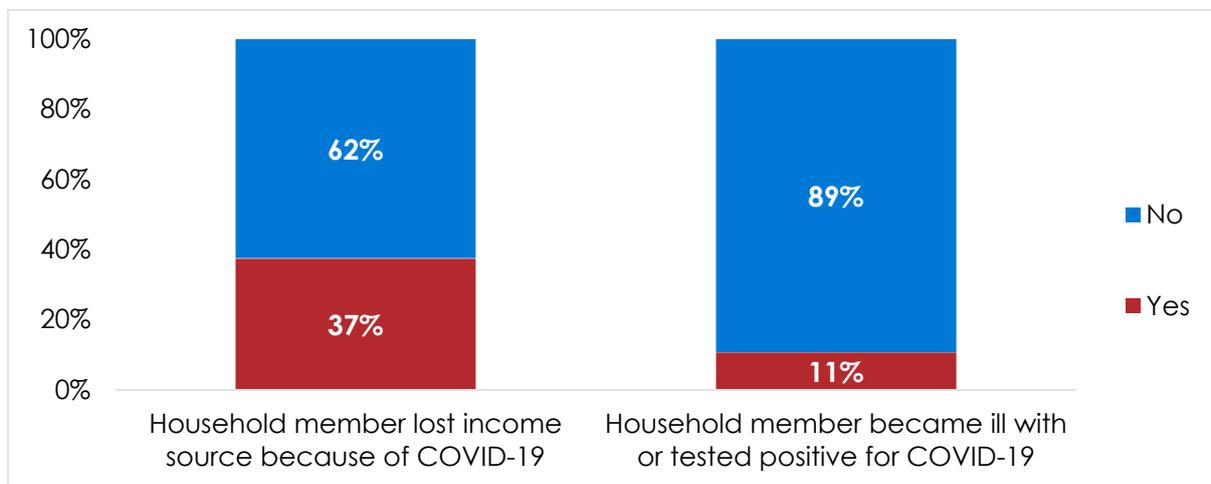
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life.

Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led by Advice Lesotho, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult citizens in February-March 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Lesotho in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

Charts

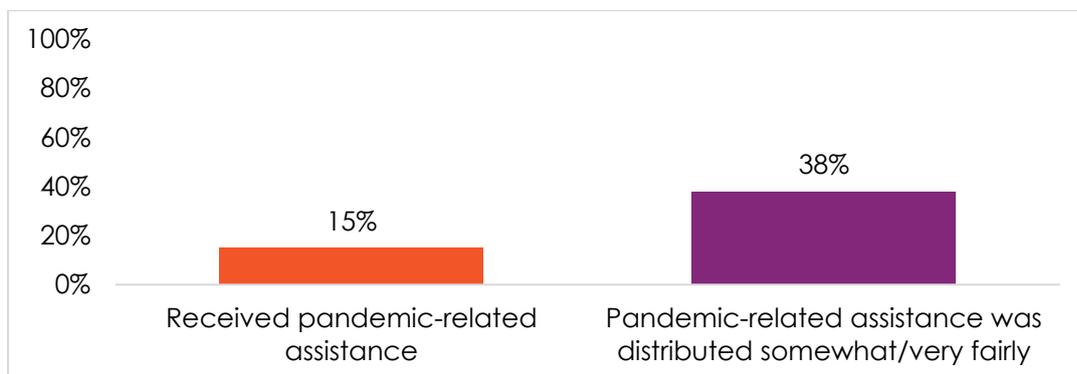
Figure 1: Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic | Lesotho | 2022



Respondents were asked:

Please tell me whether you personally or any other member of your household have been affected in any of the following ways by the COVID-19 pandemic: Became ill with, or tested positive for, COVID-19? Temporarily or permanently lost a job, business, or primary source of income?

Figure 2: Pandemic-related relief assistance | Lesotho | 2022

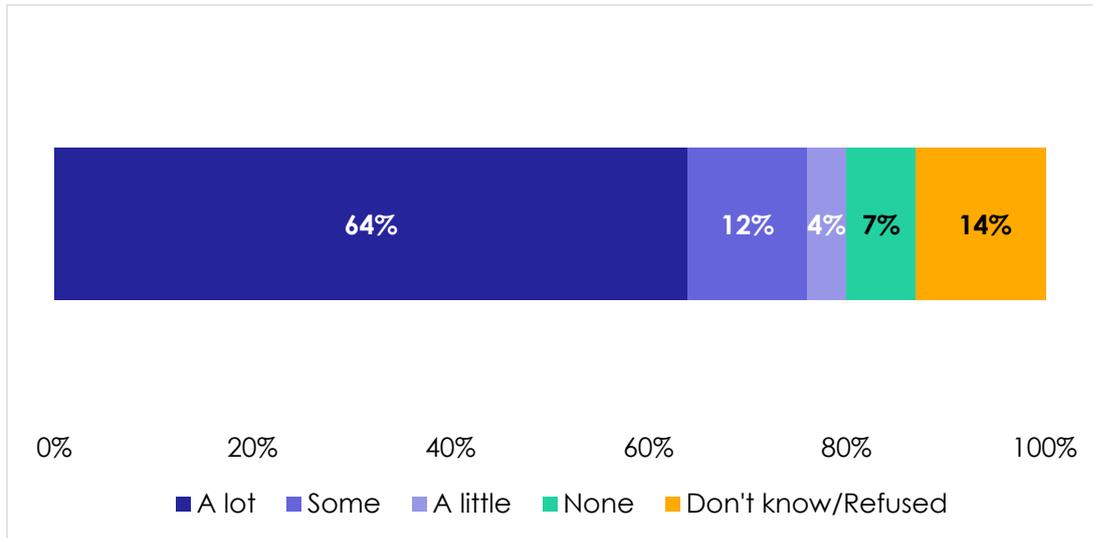


Respondents were asked:

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, have you or your household received any assistance from government, like food, cash payments, relief from bill payments, or other assistance that you were not normally receiving before the pandemic? (% who say "yes")

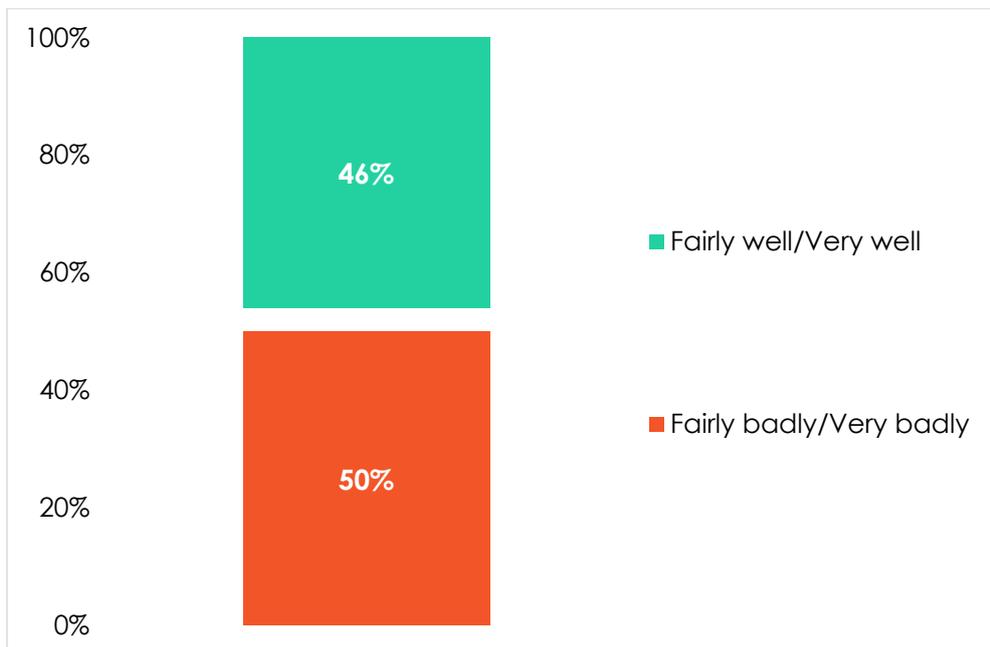
Do you think that the distribution of government support to people during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example through food packages or cash payments, has been fair or unfair? (% who say "somewhat fairly" or "very fairly")

Figure 3: Perceived pandemic-related corruption | Lesotho | 2022



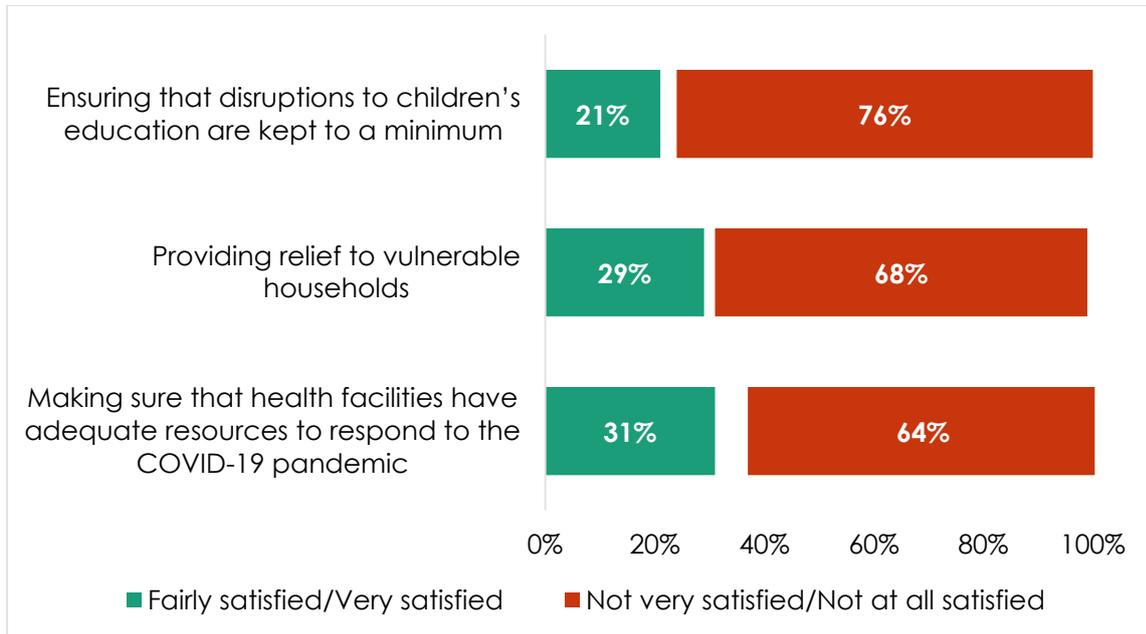
Respondents were asked: Considering all of the funds and resources that were available to the government for combating and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, how much do you think was lost or stolen due to corruption?

Figure 4: Government response to COVID-19 | Lesotho | 2022



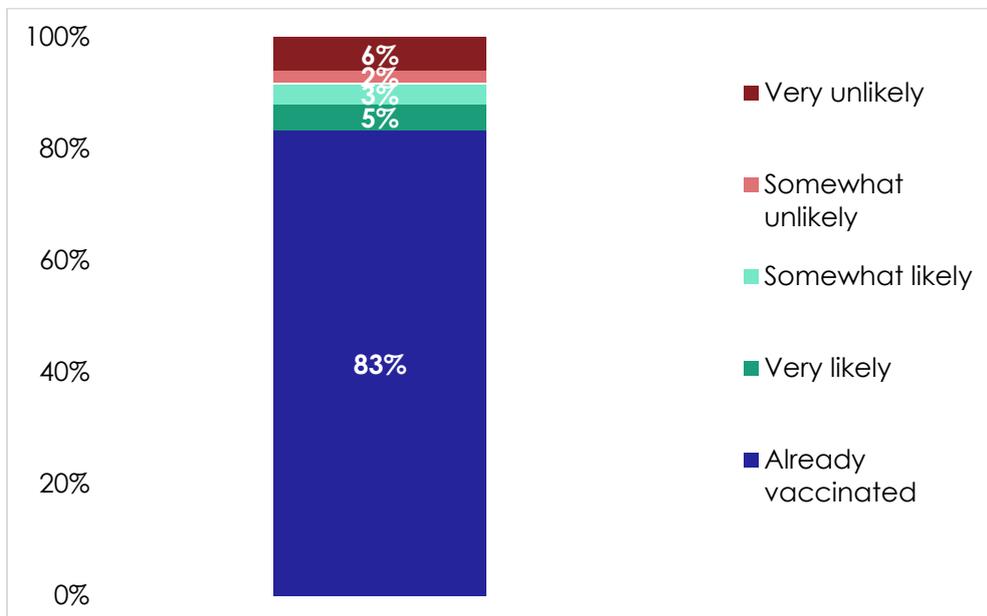
Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government has managed the response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Figure 5: Satisfaction with government's response to COVID-19 | Lesotho | 2022



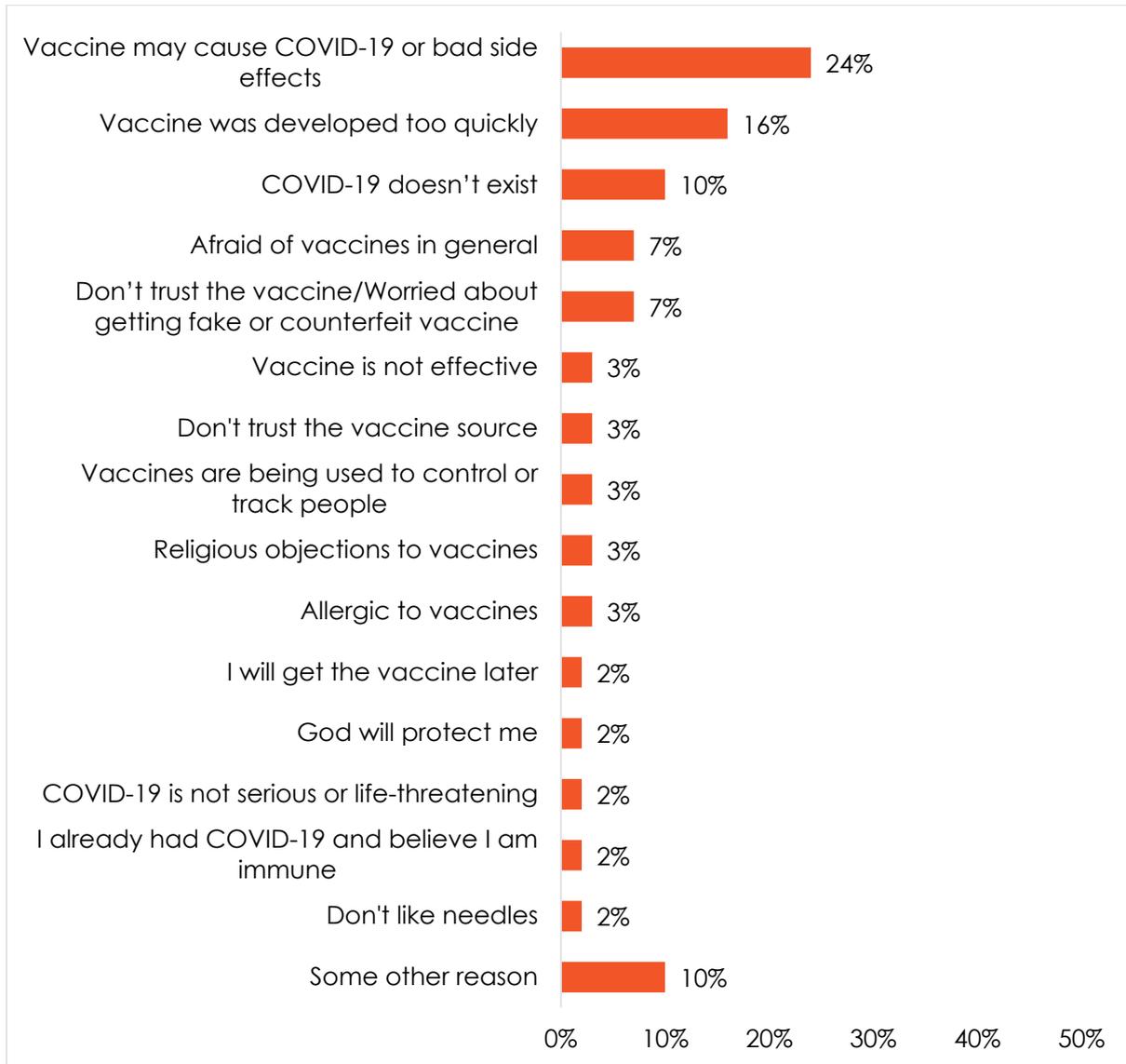
Respondents were asked: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the government's response to COVID-19 in the following areas?

Figure 6: Vaccination status and likelihood of trying to get vaccinated | Lesotho | 2021



Respondents were asked: Have you received a vaccination against COVID-19, either one or two doses? [If no:] If a vaccine for COVID-19 is available, how likely are you to try to get vaccinated?

Figure 7: Main reason for vaccine hesitancy | Lesotho | 2022



Respondents who say they are not likely to get vaccinated were asked: What is the main reason that you would be unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine? (Respondents who say they have been vaccinated or are likely to get vaccinated are excluded.)

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